

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



GOD PROVIDES FOR ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE

Genesis 22 God tests Abraham

Aim: To ask our honest questions

Abraham and Sarah waited a long time for the gift of their precious son Isaac. In today's story we find out what happened when God presented Abraham with a difficult choice that put Isaac's life in danger. Would Abraham ignore God's command, or would he obey and do what God asked of him?

Each child will need:

→ Sticky notes, pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

→ Flipchart paper and pens

Start It

 **Say:** In today's session Abraham has to make a difficult choice. Here are some 'Would you rather' questions to get you thinking about making choices.

Would you rather ...

- be able to fly or be invisible?
- have a pet dinosaur or a pet dragon?
- go on a rollercoaster or go skydiving?
- be the smartest person in the world or the best athlete in the world?
- eat a beetle or get stung by a bee?
- be really fast or really strong?
- read minds or see through walls?
- have a purple nose or green ears?

Sing It

 **Say:** Today's song is all about our Bible character for this month, Abraham. See if you can keep up with the actions.

'Father Abraham' lyrics & dance by Kids on the Move (2 mins 51 secs)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASXowiv3FAc

Tell It

 **Say:** In our last session we met Abraham, a God-fearing man who left his homeland in Haran to follow God's instructions. Although Abraham and his wife Sarah were old, God promised that they would have many descendants. Read Genesis 21:1-7 to find out what happened.

Read:

'The Lord cared for Sarah as he had said. He did for her what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant. And she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. Everything happened at the time God had said it would. Abraham named his son Isaac. Sarah gave birth to this son of Abraham.'

— (Genesis 21:1-3 *ICB*)

Ask: How do you think Abraham and Sarah felt when their baby boy was born?

Say: All children are special, but Abraham and Sarah must have cherished Isaac so much as they had waited a long time for a child. That's why today's story is so dramatic. Sometimes there are stories in the Bible that are difficult to understand. At times it is hard to imagine why certain characters make the choices they do, because it seems so far away from the world we live in today. Watch the clip to find out about the difficult choice Abraham had to make.

Video

Abraham Offers Isaac by Cartoon Works (4 mins 29 secs)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGYtH4FBi_4

Discuss:

- Why do you think God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac?
- It took three days for Abraham and Isaac to reach the place set aside for sacrifice. What do you think that journey was like?
- At the last minute, what did the angel of the Lord tell Abraham to do?
- Abraham gave the mountain a name. What did it mean?

Say: Even though it was a difficult choice to make, Abraham trusted God's wisdom rather than his own.

Read:

'The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time. The angel said, "The Lord says, 'You did not keep back your son, your only son, from me. Because you did this, I make you this promise by my own name: I will surely bless you and give you many descendants. They will be as many as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. And they will capture the cities of their enemies. Through your descendants all the nations on the earth will be blessed. This is because you obeyed me.'"

— (Genesis 22:15-18 *ICB*)

Action It

In this part of the session there will be an opportunity for the children to ask questions about what they find confusing in the Bible. Depending on your group, they may need prompting or reminding about questions that people have asked about the Bible for centuries. It may be good to prepare some of these in advance to prompt discussion.

Step one

Give the children thinking time on their own. What do they find confusing about the Bible? Ask them to write down questions they would like answered about the Bible or any stories within it. They need to write one question on each sticky note.

Step two

Ask the children to partner up with someone else and read through the questions together. The pair then choose the top five questions they would like to explore and put the rest in a pile.

Step three

Each pair then teams up with another pair to read through their ten combined questions. As a group, choose their top five questions and keep the rest in a separate pile.

Step four

Depending on the size of your group, you may need to complete one more round where all the questions are discussed, and the final top five are selected. Write down the top five questions on a flip chart and collect in the remaining sticky notes.

Ask: We now have five questions that you would like answering as a group. How could we find out the answers to these questions?

Discuss different ways that the children could find out the answers to their challenging biblical questions. Ask each child to choose and write down a question to focus on as their *Explore It at Home* activity. Encourage them to use some of the methods discussed to find out an answer to their question and bring back their response in the next session.

You may also like to share the many questions generated by the children with the wider church to see if they have any answers! Ask the corps or church leader if they can create a moment for the wider church to share their ideas.

Say: There are many things in the Bible that we may find confusing, but there is always someone to ask or places where we can start to discover the answer. It is important to recognise that we will never fully understand and know God as he is beyond our understanding. Just like Abraham, we need to trust in God's wisdom when we are struggling to understand his word.

Pray It

Say: Learning about God and his word can take a lifetime. Even at the grand old age of 100, Abraham was still amazed by God when his son Isaac was born. Imagine how confused he was when God asked him to sacrifice such a precious child. We will never fully understand everything about God, but he continues to work in our lives, helping us to know him more.

Memory verse

To remind us that God is always working in our hearts and minds, let's share our memory verse together.

'And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.'

— (Philippians 1:6 *ESV*)

Bring the session to a close by praying with the children and asking God to bring understanding to the questions they have asked. Incorporate the children's questions into your prayer time.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

MAY
SESSION 02

GOD PROVIDES FOR ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE

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FOR ME



Create

In today's session we played the game 'Would you rather'. Have a go at making up your own ten questions, and then play the game with the people at home or your friends at school.

TOGETHER



Discover

As part of this week's session, you should have written down one question about the Bible to try to answer. In the session we talked about different ways that you could find out the answer. Ask someone at home to help you and bring what you have discovered to the next *Explore It* session.



Song for the week

'Father Abraham' lyrics & dance by Kids on the Move

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASXowiv3FAC



Memory verse

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<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

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